GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:678
ANSWERED ON:22.10.2008
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER S VISIT TO CHINA
Shukla Smt. Karuna;Subba Shri Moni Kumar;Tripathi Shri Chandramani

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister of External Affairs recently visited China; and

(b) if so, the details of the discussion held and the agreements signed between both the countries during the visit?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a)- (b) EAM undertook an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 4 to 7 June 2008. He called on the Chinese Vice President, Mr. Xi Jinping, during which both leaders had positive discussions on the importance of India-China relations and the role of the two countries in the 21st century world.
In their talks, EAM and Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. Yang Jiechi reviewed the understandings reached during PM's visit to China in January 2008, and also discussed how to promote more trust and understanding in concrete terms. It was mutually agreed that future high-level visits including the visit by NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo to India and by Rashtrapatiji to China would be a positive affirmation of bilateral ties. It was agreed that the Chinese Foreign Minister would visit India in 2008 [the visit took place on 8 September 2008]. The matter of trade deficit was raised with the Chinese side. Chinese Foreign Minister conveyed willingness to address this concern and also said that China would be sending a corporate purchasing mission (which has since visited India in October 2008). Both sides discussed future steps regarding finalisation of the India-China Regional Trading Arrangement and agreed that it would be discussed by the Commerce Ministers of the two countries. The two Ministers discussed the India-China Boundary Question and agreed that the Special Representatives should be encouraged to continue their discussions to find a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement. They reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas, pending final settlement of the boundary question. They agreed to hold the second joint military exercise and the second defence dialogue in India in December 2008. Functional cooperation in the areas of water resources, energy, environment, culture etc were discussed. The two Ministers also welcomed the decision to hold a 'Festival of India' in China and a 'Festival of China' in India in 2010 in order to promote greater awareness of each other's culture. The Chinese side said that they "understand and support India's aspiration to play a greater role in the United Nations, including in the Security Council." Both sides agreed to positively view each other's participation in regional processes, to strengthen coordination and consultation within regional mechanisms and to explore together and with other countries a new architecture for closer regional cooperation in Asia.

During the visit, an MoU for provision of hydrological information of the Brahmaputra River in flood season by China to India was signed. The other events included: formal inauguration by EAM of the new Consulate General of India in Guangzhou; address by EAM at Beijing University on 'India's Foreign Policy Today'; EAM attended the ceremony organised for the joint release of stamps by India Post and China Post to mark the commemoration of India-China bilateral relations; and witnessed the handing over of the Padma Bhushan award to Prof. Ji Xianlin. EAM also had a meeting with Mr. Wang Yang, the Party Secretary of the Guangdong CPC Provincial Committee, in Guangzhou.